المجلس الإسلامي
Islamic Council

11 July 1989

The Rt Hon Mrs Margaret Thatcher, MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing St
London SW1

Dear Prime Minister,

Reports following the military coup in the Sudan are causing us grave concern for the safety of Mr Sadiq al Mahdi, Sudan's democratically elected Prime Minister, and his colleagues.

Lieutenant-General Omar el-Bashir has told news conferences that Mr al Mahdi will be put on trial before a military tribunal and if convicted of capital charges will face the death penalty. We fear that these statements are preparing the ground for drastic action against Mr al Mahdi. It seems that the military junta is holding Mr al Mahdi responsible for all Sudan's troubles, problems of massive complexity which were inherited by Mr al Mahdi, not created by him, and which he has been doing his best to solve.

Prime Minister, Sudan, under Sadiq al Mahdi, was one of the very few vestiges of democracy left in Africa. It would be very tragic if this were permitted also to disappear.

The Islamic Council therefore appeals to you to use your good offices and the weight of your government and your personal influence as a person of the highest international standing, to press for justice for Mr al Mahdi and his colleagues, and to seek their immediate and unconditional release from custody. If they are brought to trial, we hope that your government will bring every pressure to bear on those responsible for free and open trials before civilian courts, with normal access to lawyers of their choice, the right to appeal, and all procedures in accordance with accepted international standards of justice.

I thank you for your attention. With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Salem Azzam

Salem Azzam
Secretary General

16 Grosvenor Crescent London SW1 7EP Telephone 01-235 9832 Telex 894240 Islami G Cables ISLAMIAH

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

27 July 1989

Dear Mr. Azzam.

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your letter of 11 July on behalf of the Islamic Council.

Any proceedings against the former Prime Minister, Sadiq al Mahdi, are of course a matter solely for the Sudanese authorities. We naturally hope that any inquiry into the activities of the previous government will be conducted fairly and correctly. Our Ambassador in Khartoum has indeed been assured by the new government that the independence of the judiciary will be maintained.

The new government have said that it is their intention to concentrate on solving the Sudan's serious economic problems and bringing peace to the country, rather than dwell on the past. We welcome that approach.

Yours sincerely,

(C.D. POWELL)

Mr. Salem Azzam

المجلس الإسلامي
Islamic Council

12 July 1989

Chancellor Helmut Kohl

Dear Chancellor Kohl,

Reports following the military coup in the Sudan are causing us grave concern for the safety of Mr Sadiq al Mahdi, Sudan's democratically elected Prime Minister and his colleagues.

Lieutenant-General Omar el-Bashir has told news conferences that Mr al Mahdi will be put on trial before a military tribunal and if convicted of capital charges will face the death penalty. We fear that these statements are preparing the ground for drastic action against Mr al Mahdi. It seems that the military junta is holding Mr al Mahdi responsible for all Sudan's troubles, problems of massive complexity which were inherited by Mr al Mahdi, not created by him, and which he has been doing his best to solve.

Sudan, under Sadiq al Mahdi, was one of the very few vestiges of democracy left in Africa. It would be tragic if this were permitted also to disappear.

The Islamic Council therefore appeals to you to use your good offices and the weight of your government to press for justice for Mr al Mahdi and his colleagues, and to seek their immediate and unconditional release from custody. If they are brought to trial, we hope that your government will bring every pressure to bear on those responsible for free and open trials before civilian courts, with normal access to lawyers of their choice, the right to appeal, and all procedures in accordance with accepted international standards of justice.

I thank you for your attention. With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Salem Azzam

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Secretary General

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Dear Secretary General,

In your letter to the Chancellor dated 12 July 1989, you requested the Federal Government to ask for the release of Sadiq al Mahdi, the overthrown prime minister of Sudan, and to support the call for fair and lawful proceedings when dealing with the charges filed against him. The Chancellor thanks you for your letter and has asked me to reply to it.

As you no doubt know, it is a fundamental policy of the Federal Government to encourage the observance of human rights throughout the world. The Chancellor reaffirmed this commitment of the Federal Government in the statement he made before the German Bundestag on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights at a general meeting of the UN in December 1988.

Sudan joined this international pact on civil and political rights of 1966. This pact includes regulations on arrest and imprisonment in Article 9, and regulations on court and legal proceedings in Article 15. The Federal Government wishes that Sudan adheres to its obligations based on this pact in the case of the imprisonment of Sadiq al Mahdi.

There is in any case no source of information how far the Sudanese Government has violated or upheld human rights in connexion with the imprisonment of the deposed Prime Minister.

BUNDESKANZLERAMT

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(Bei Antwort bitte angeben)

Bundeskanzleramt Postfach 5300 Bonn 1

5300 Bonn 1, den 28. August 1989
Postfach
Adenauerallee 141

Fernruf 0228/56- 2216
oder 0228/561 (Vermittlung)

Telex 886750
Telefax 0228/562357

An den
Generalsekretär des Islamic Council
Herrn Salem Azzam
16 Grosvenor Crescent
London SW1 7EP
Großbritannien

Sehr geehrter Herr Generalsekretär,

mit Ihrem an den Herrn Bundeskanzler gerichteten Schreiben vom 12. Juli 1989 hatten Sie die Bundesregierung gebeten, sich für die Freilassung des gestürzten sudanesischen Premierministers Sadiq al Mahdi und, im Falle der Anklageerhebung gegen diesen, für ein rechtsstaatliches Verfahren einzusetzen. Der Herr Bundeskanzler dankt Ihnen für Ihr Schreiben. Er hat mich gebeten, Ihnen zu antworten.

Wie Ihnen sicher bekannt ist, ist es die grundsätzliche Politik der Bundesregierung, überall in der Welt für die Einhaltung der Menschenrechte einzutreten. Dieses Engagement der Bundesregierung hat der Herr Bundeskanzler in seiner Erklärung vor dem Deutschen Bundestag aus Anlaß des 40. Jahrestages der Verabschiedung der Allgemeinen Erklärung der Menschenrechte durch die Generalversammlung der Vereinten Nationen im Dezember 1988 erneut bekräftigt.

Sudan ist dem internationalen Pakt über bürgerliche und politische Rechte von 1966 beigetreten, der in Artikel 9 Regeln über die Inhaftierung und in Artikel 15 Regeln über Gerichtsverfahren enthält. Die Bundesregierung geht davon aus, daß Sudan sich auch im Falle der Inhaftierung von Sadiq al Mahdi an seine hierauf beruhenden Verpflichtungen hält.

...

Ihr liegen jedenfalls keine Erkenntnisse vor, wonach die sudanesische Regierung im Zusammenhang mit der Inhaftierung des gestürzten Premierministers Sadiq al Mahdi Menschenrechtsverletzungen begangen oder geduldet hätte.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen

Dr. Ueberschaer

(Dr. Ueberschaer)

المجلس الإسلامي
Islamic Council

12 July 1989

President George Bush
The White House
Washington DC

Dear President Bush,

Reports following the military coup in the Sudan are causing us grave concern for the safety of Mr Sadiq al Mahdi, Sudan's democratically elected Prime Minister, and his colleagues.

Lieutenant-General Omar el-Bashir has told news conferences that Mr al Mahdi will be put on trial before a military tribunal and if convicted of capital charges will face the death penalty. We fear that these statements are preparing the ground for drastic action against Mr al Mahdi. It seems that the military junta is holding Mr al Mahdi responsible for all Sudan's troubles, problems of massive complexity which were inherited by Mr al Mahdi, not created by him, and which he has been doing his best to solve.

Mr President, Sudan, under Sadiq al Mahdi, was one of the very few vestiges of democracy left in Africa. It would be very tragic if this were permitted also to disappear.

The Islamic Council therefore appeals to you to use your good offices and the weight of your government to press for justice for Mr al Mahdi and his colleagues, and to seek their immediate and unconditional release from custody. If they are brought to trial, we hope that the United States' Government will bring every pressure to bear on those responsible for free and open trials before civilian courts, with normal access to lawyers of their choice, the right to appeal, and all procedures in accordance with accepted international standards of justice.

I thank you for your attention. With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Salem Azzam

Salem Azzam
Secretary General

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2 OCTOBER 1989
FOR LT GENERAL OMAR HASSAN AL BASHIR,
ARMY HEADQUARTERS, KHARTOUM

THE ISLAMIC COUNCIL IS DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE CONTINUED DETENTION OF SAYYID SADIQ AL MAHDI, DR HASSAN AL TURABI, SAYYID MOHAMED OTHMAN AL MIRGHANI AND OTHER POLITICAL PRISONERS. THE COUNCIL IS ALSO DEEPLY DISTURBED AT THE ARREST ON 5 SEPTEMBER OF SARA AL FADIL MAHMOUD, SARA ABDULLAHI NAGDULLAH AND RASHIDA IBRAHIMI ABDUL KARIM.

WE APPEAL TO YOU TO RELEASE ALL OF THE ABOVE AND OTHER POLITICAL PRISONERS WITHOUT DELAY. THIS WOULD EARN A GOOD NAME FOR YOUR GOVERNMENT AND GOODWILL OF PEOPLE EVERYWHERE, ESPECIALLY IN THE MUSLIM WORLD.
WITH KIND REGARDS
SALEM AZZAM
SECRETARY GENERAL
ISLAMIC COUNCIL

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LT GENERAL OMAR HASSAN EL BASHIR
ARMY HEADQUARTERS
KHARTOUM

REPORTS REACHING US AND AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL ABOUT THE INTIMIDATION OF SAYYID SADIQ AL MAHDI ARE CAUSING THE GRAVEST CONCERN. WE HAVE ALSO RECEIVED INFORMATION ABOUT WIDESPREAD ILL-TREATMENT OF OTHER POLITICAL PRISONERS, INCLUDING THE WITHHOLDING OF NECESSARY MEDICAL TREATMENT FROM SARA AL FADIL MAHMOUD AND OTHERS.

THE ISLAMIC COUNCIL URGES YOU TO AUTHORISE THE IMMEDIATE AND UNCONDITIONAL RELEASE OF ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS WHO HAVE BEEN HELD NOW FOR MONTHS WITHOUT CHARGE OR TRIAL AND ARE DETAINED ONLY BECAUSE OF THEIR POLITICAL BELIEFS. THIS IS IN BREACH OF ALL INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTED STANDARDS OF JUSTICE AND GREATLY DAMAGES THE REPUTATION OF SUDAN IN THE EYES OF THE WORLD. YOU WILL BE HELD PERSONALLY RESPONSIBLE IF ANY FURTHER HARM IS DONE TO SADIQ AL MAHDI OR ANY OTHER PERSON. AND WE APPEAL TO YOU TO ACT WITH JUSTICE AND TO CEASE FORTHWITH YOUR ACTIONS WHICH ARE DOING GREAT HARM TO THE GOOD NAME OF SUDAN.

SALEM AZZAM
SECRETARY GENERAL
ISLAMIC COUNCIL
30 OCTOBER 1989

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1 MAY 1990
HIS EXCELLENCY LIEUTENANT GENERAL OMAR HASSAN AL BASHIR
THE ISLAMIC COUNCIL IS VERY CONCERNED AT THE CONTINUING HOUSE ARREST WITHOUT CHARGE OF SAYYID SADIQ AL MAHDI, AND AT THE DETENTION ALSO WITHOUT ANY CHARGES BROUGHT OF HIS WIFE, SARA AL FADIL, AND HIS SON, ABDERRAHMANE. REPORTS FROM AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL STATE THAT SADIQ AL MAHDI IS BEING DENIED NECESSARY MEDICAL CARE, IS BEING KEPT IN ONE ROOM AND IS BEING DEPRIVED OF FAMILY VISITS.

WE URGE YOU, IN THE INTERESTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION OF SUDAN, TO ACT IN ACCORANCE WITH UNIVERSALLY ACCEPTED STANDARDS OF JUSTICE, AND TO RELEASE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS, INCLUDING SADIQ AL MAHDI AND HIS FAMILY, CURRENTLY BEING HELD IN SUDAN.
SALEM AZZAM
SECRETARY GENERAL
ISLAMIC COUNCIL

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to Human Rights organisations including:
1) Amnesty International
2) Arab Organisation for Human Rights
3) UN Centre for Human Rights

المجلس الاسلامي
Islamic Council

8 June 1990

It is now a year since the military coup in Sudan overthrew the democratically elected government of Sayyid Sadiq al Mahdi, who is still under house arrest, and has still not been charged with any offence or brought to trial. He is not allowed family visits and has been denied necessary treatment for an eye condition.

Sadiq al Mahdi's son, Abberrahmane, a lieutenant in the army, is also under arrest with no charges brought. Reports from Sudan say that he has been persecuted and ill-treated and once was taken wounded to the military hospital in Omdurman after being beaten. His present whereabouts are unknown.

We believe that the treatment of Abberrahmane is a deliberate pressure on the former Prime Minister, and that he is being held for that reason only, and we are concerned that Sadiq al Mahdi himself is being held as a hostage to ensure the quiet of his many supporters and followers. The recent summary executions of the officers allegedly involved in an attempted coup against Lt General Omar al Bashir show the lengths to which he will go to retain power, and we are gravely worried for Sadiq al Mahdi's safety.

There is no legitimate reason for the military government to keep Sadiq al Mahdi under arrest - they have not charged him with any offence - and we appeal to you to put pressure on the current government to secure his immediate and unconditional release.

Yours sincerely,

Salem Azzam

Salem Azzam
Secretary General

cc Mubarak el-Mahdi
+ list 1 orgs
14/6/90

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